

1

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

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U.S. Immigration And Naturalization Service

6

And

7

Joint Task Force Six

8

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Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

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(PEIS)

11

12

November 2, 1998

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McAllen, Texas

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U.S. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE  
AND  
JOINT TASK FORCE SIX  
SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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STATEMENT OF FACTS  
November 2, 1998  
Public Scoping Meeting

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Reporter's Attendance Time: 6:15-8:15  
Place Attended: McAllen Civic Center

Speakers

Ron Ruffennack (Moderator)  
Ray Garza  
John Esquivel  
Mike Rossi  
Chris Ingram

Public Comment

Speakers

John Martin  
Nathan Selzer  
Rogelio T. Nunez  
Larry Ditto  
Roy Brooks  
Ernesto Reyes  
Bobby Elizande  
Ninfa Ochoa-Drueger  
Arturo Longoria  
Phil Anderson  
Linda Gardner

WITNESS MY HAND, this the 24th day of November,  
A.D., 1998.

Mark A. Kvapil  
MARK A. KVAPIL

Certified Shorthand Reporter  
in and for the State of Texas  
Ph. (956) 318-2266  
Certification No. 2088  
Expiration: 12-31-98

ORIGINAL

U.S. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE  
AND  
JOINT TASK FORCE SIX  
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ORIGINAL

1 PUBLIC\_SCOPING\_MEETING

2 MR. RUFFENNACK: Good evening, ladies and  
3 gentlemen. I want to thank you very much for coming  
4 this evening. This is a public scoping meeting on the  
5 draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement or  
6 PEIS, for Joint Task Force Six and Immigration &  
7 Naturalization Service Missions primarily along the  
8 southwest border.

9 My name is Ron Ruffennack and I'll be  
10 monitoring this evenings meeting. Before a decision is  
11 made to commit any program to accompany strategies  
12 JTF-6, INS, must do a complete analysis of them. This  
13 type of broad analysis is referred to as programmatic  
14 EIS rather than the more commonly known EIS which  
15 analyzes the specific project proposed by the  
16 government. Part of the process involves receiving  
17 public input during the early phases of the PEIS and  
18 this is called scoping.

19 At scoping meetings we ask for public  
20 input on the scope or range of issues that should be  
21 considered for analysis. Comments received during  
22 scoping are addressed during the development of the  
23 PEIS document. And I might add at this point that this  
24 is the eighth public scoping meeting that has been held  
25 on this subject over the last several weeks. There are

1 two more meetings scheduled which will complete this  
2 series, one tomorrow night in Laredo and one Thursday  
3 evening in Del Rio.

4 We have two goals tonight. To provide  
5 you information about JTF-6 and INS activities and to  
6 receive your comments in consideration of the PEIS.  
7 And I will go over the proceedings after our  
8 presentation this evening on how we are going to handle  
9 the public comment period.

10 My purpose at this evenings meeting is to  
11 make sure that we have an orderly meeting and everyone  
12 that wants to speak has an opportunity to do so. And  
13 you may comment at this meeting in one of three ways.  
14 You can hand it to us in a written statement. You can  
15 come to the mic and provide comments. Comments will be  
16 limited to five minutes. All public scoping meetings  
17 we're holding and have held are being formatted exactly  
18 in the same way. Our procedures in the past have been  
19 to give public comments five minutes, or you may  
20 comment directly to the court reporter following this  
21 evenings meeting. And, of course, at anytime through  
22 December 16 you can provide your written comments to  
23 the address on the facts sheet that you'll be provided.

24 This evening we have speakers who will  
25 hopefully give you a better understanding of JTF-6 and

1 Border Patrol activities. And our first speaker this  
2 evening will be Ray Garza who is the assistant chief of  
3 the McAllen sector.

4 MR. GARZA: Good evening. My name is Ray  
5 Garza. I am here representing the chief parole for  
6 Jose Garza for the McAllen sector headquarters. We are  
7 under the central region Dallas, Texas office which in  
8 turn falls under the headquarters, Border Patrol  
9 Headquarters INS office in Washington, D.C. ---

10 MR. RUFFENNACK: He is having a hard time  
11 hearing you.

12 MR. GARZA: Over the last -- I've been  
13 here since 1990. We traditionally had Border Patrol  
14 activities which concentrated mainly on the land watch  
15 stations and checkpoint stations. And we pretty  
16 much -- it was business as usual in that those  
17 activities were conducted mainly in several tiers.  
18 When operation Gatekeeper came about in San Diego,  
19 California and proved to be very successful the  
20 commissioner wanted to take those activities -- that  
21 type of an operation and move it to other locations  
22 along the U.S.-Mexico border. With that came Operation  
23 Rio Grande. In 19 -- August of 1997 the strategy for  
24 Operation Rio Grande began.

25 First, to give you an overview of our

1 sector. Our sector had -- covers 19 counties, 17,000  
2 square miles. And the area in green is all the area of  
3 the McAllen sector. The -- we have nine stations. It  
4 was the McAllen sector which includes two checkpoints,  
5 one on Highway 281 and one on Highway 77, and a further  
6 station north of Corpus Christi, Texas which has a  
7 compliment of about 11 agents at this time. This is  
8 where we were before Operation Rio Grande, just to give  
9 you a comparison, from FY 94 to FY 97. And also if you  
10 look at the bottom row of figures that's our man power  
11 for each one of those years. In 1997 we had 243,000  
12 apprehensions for that year.

13 With Operation Rio Grande our strategy  
14 was to break our sector up into corridors. Corridor  
15 one being the second line over from the gulf -- the  
16 second red line, corridor one, which runs up highway 77  
17 which is the busiest corridor for the McAllen sector as  
18 far as alien traffic and narcotics traffic. And  
19 corridor two being Highway 281. And corridor three  
20 being -- beginning at Rio Grande City and running north  
21 through Hebron, Texas. And corridor four which also  
22 has been a prime course -- and we've tried to address  
23 that with the help of the Coast Guard and the Texas  
24 Parks and Wildlife which is the Intracoastal Canal and  
25 the gulf.

1                   We have about two phases of Operation Rio  
2 Grande. And the first was an outreach phase. Prior to  
3 the commencement back in August of last year we had an  
4 outreach phase where our public affairs office  
5 contacted media personnel. We held meetings. We held  
6 press conferences. And also had the Mexican  
7 authorities, our counter parts at the federal, state  
8 and local levels and we held meetings discussing what  
9 we were going to do in Operation Rio Grande and that  
10 outreach lasted approximately two months prior to the  
11 commencement. And in August of '97 we began phase two  
12 which was the reinforcement phase.

13                   The concept of Operation Rio Grande was  
14 deterrence or prevention, that's our tier one, and this  
15 is where we broke the tradition. We moved as many  
16 personnel to -- on to the line watch operation which  
17 means working at the stations along the border at the  
18 river. That would be Brownsville, Port Isabel,  
19 Harlingen, McAllen, Mercedes and Rio Grande City.

20                   The apprehension in tier two would mean  
21 certainty of arrests. We left a contingent of  
22 personnel in tier two which would be our transportation  
23 check operations and also our traffic check operations  
24 on two major highways that I showed you previously.  
25 And our goal was to gain some effective control in each



1 one of these areas and also to maintain the control.

2                   And the equipment and methods that we  
3 used to do this. First of all, these are what we call  
4 Sky Watch Units. And they give us an advantage along  
5 the river and other areas such as terrain check  
6 operations where we had some elevation and place an  
7 agent in these Sky Watches, or we also had the option  
8 of placing Loris scopes on these Sky Watches. Of  
9 course, a Loris scope is an infra-red scope that you  
10 use during nighttime operations. And the agent can  
11 view the area near the Sky Watch through the camera.

12                   Permanent lighting, the lighting you see  
13 here is down in the Brownsville area. It's the only  
14 place we have permanent lighting and also temporary  
15 lighting. If you notice a little to the right that's a  
16 temporary light unit and we use it there. The main  
17 focus of Operation Rio Grande, of course, was to deter  
18 the illegal entry of aliens and also to seize narcotics  
19 brought into this country illegally. However in that  
20 area of Brownsville, Harlingen, Port Isabel and McAllen  
21 we have very big river bandit problems. People were  
22 getting assaulted. People were getting killed and  
23 robbed in those areas. It is very necessary for us to  
24 take extreme measures in those areas and one of those  
25 was to light up the Brownsville area, an area between

1 two ports-of-entry. It's a real small area but you  
2 would be amazed at how much activity we have had in  
3 there. And it went from any type of crime to just an  
4 assault or robbery to rape and murder. We had one  
5 agent that was there that was fired upon and was  
6 wounded. We had an agent in Rio Grande City that was  
7 also fired upon and was wounded. And agents also got  
8 in a scuffle in areas that were not lit up in areas  
9 where officers work. Of course, these people are  
10 crossing here and are being taken advantage of by these  
11 smugglers. So these units -- light units and permanent  
12 lighting which work with other law -- other federal  
13 agencies in that area and the City of Brownsville to  
14 light up that area and take targets away from the  
15 criminal element.

16               We also initiated the boat patrol in  
17 February of this year. They serve four purposes,  
18 intelligence gathering, search and rescue, other agency  
19 support and, of course, the residual effect of  
20 deterrence. Right now we have it in Port Isabel,  
21 Brownsville. We just moved one boat into the McAllen  
22 area. With the coordination of Fish & Wildlife and the  
23 City of Brownsville we get some clearing in the  
24 immediate area of Brownsville.

25               If you look in the very center of this

1 photo you will see what looks to be a road across that  
2 field, a very faint road, but actually those are all  
3 tracks that were made by very large groups of aliens  
4 coming across there. That was made by foot traffic.  
5 And the number that it would take to do that is in the  
6 50 to 6200 crossing. Before Operation Rio Grande this  
7 was very typical of some farm land down on the Rio  
8 Grande River. And you no longer see that. Also we  
9 had -- we had several people who would fall prey to  
10 smugglers being left out in the brush and being left in  
11 box cars. And the additional man power which Operation  
12 Rio Grande brought us gave us the resources to be out  
13 looking for these people who fall prey to that and we  
14 had several instances. Our special agents smuggling  
15 operations have also been very disruptive by our  
16 enhancement efforts with Operation Rio Grande.

17 Just to list some of our accomplishments.  
18 We have effectively taken 77 miles of the border.  
19 These zones that are listed up there one through six  
20 are in Brownsville and the Port Isabel area at this  
21 time and we are effectively managing that area. What  
22 was really -- what was really noticed in the very  
23 beginning of Operation Rio Grande in the first month or  
24 two -- the Brownsville Police Department reported to us  
25 that there was a large decrease in the crime in that

1 area. This figure 20 percent I think has already risen  
2 to 34 percent. So there has been a definite effect  
3 that we have had in crime in local city areas not just  
4 Brownsville but up river towards Progresso, McAllen and  
5 Hidalgo area. Panhandlers in Brownsville have all but  
6 been eliminated. River bandit activity has ceased in  
7 targeted areas. The daily illegal commuter traffic has  
8 moved to other areas out of the targeted area. One  
9 thing we strive to do in one of our goals in Operation  
10 Rio Grande was to improve the quality of life this side  
11 of the border. We believe we have done that. Alien  
12 smuggling fees have increased and that's an indication  
13 to us that it's more difficult for them to cross. That  
14 Operation Rio Grande has driven the price up and making  
15 it more difficult for the aliens to make their way into  
16 the U.S. or at least having as successful smuggling  
17 venture for them to get into the U.S.

18 This chart is kind of difficult to see.  
19 Probably the only thing that's significant here from  
20 your viewpoint here is that the red is below the blue.  
21 What we're showing here is the decrease in  
22 apprehensions between 1997 and 1998. And the most  
23 significant factor again unreadable but at the very  
24 bottom right-hand corner of the numbers at the top is a  
25 figure of minus 28 percent and that's where we were in

1 1998 as compared to 1997. A drastic decrease in  
2 apprehensions. The last four years of apprehensions  
3 shows an increase every year from '94 to '97 and then  
4 in '98 that was what was projected. We were projecting  
5 to go over 300,000 apprehensions this year. The dark  
6 navy blue was what our actual apprehensions were which  
7 were down to around 250,000. So, again, the  
8 effectiveness of Operation Rio Grande.

9           An additional measure effecting this --  
10 while we are not cast and our primary function is not  
11 narcotics conviction, we do have authority between the  
12 ports-of-entry between the international bridges for  
13 narcotics. Because of that with our agency we're on  
14 line day in and day out and we make more narcotic  
15 apprehensions than any other agency. The bigger -- the  
16 red figure gives you FY 98 totals and what we have  
17 there is 263,000 pounds of marijuana during FY 98 for a  
18 value of almost \$410 million.

19           We feel that Operation Rio Grande has  
20 been very successful. We can show it through what  
21 statistics you see tonight but also in testimonials  
22 from people that live along the river, people that work  
23 along the river that own land in those areas and, of  
24 course, other law enforcement agencies that we have  
25 worked with on a daily basis such as the Brownsville

1 Police Department, the Texas Highway Patrol and other  
2 agencies such as Customs, DEA and FBI are quite  
3 successful. Thank you very much.

4 Right now I would like to introduce our  
5 Assistant Chief from Headquarters Border Patrol,  
6 Washington, D.C., Mr. John Esquivel.

7 MR. ESQUIVEL: Good evening, ladies and  
8 gentlemen. I'm John Esquivel representing the  
9 Headquarters Border Patrol in Washington, D.C. I'm  
10 going to give you a brief history of the United States  
11 Border Patrol, our operations, our missions and our  
12 strategy and the effect that our operations are having  
13 along the border.

14 The Border Patrol was first established  
15 in 1904 by then Commissioner General of Immigration who  
16 were referred to as Border Guards. In 1924 we became  
17 part of the Immigration & Naturalization Service and it  
18 was that year that the agency was actually established  
19 as the United States Border Patrol. This year we  
20 celebrate our 75th Anniversary. Originally we were a  
21 part of the Department of Labor and since 1940 we have  
22 become a part of the Department of Justice. And our  
23 parent agency is the United States Immigration &  
24 Naturalization Service.

25 We have 21 sectors along the -- in the

1 United States and also a sector in Ramey, Porto Rico.  
2 We also have, of course, the Border Patrol Academy in  
3 Kleborg, Georgia (sic) and a satellite academy in  
4 Charleston, South Carolina and one Artesia, New Mexico.  
5 We have nine -- of those 21, nine are on the southwest  
6 border extending from Brownsville, Texas to San Diego,  
7 California.

8 Commission in the United States Border  
9 Patrol system secures several boundaries of the United  
10 States by preventing or deterring illegal entry,  
11 detecting, interdicting, apprehending undocumented  
12 entrants, smugglers, narcotics, contraband and  
13 violators of other laws. And we are designated as the  
14 lead agency responsible for drug interdiction along the  
15 border between the ports-of-entry. Our operations  
16 include traditional line watch and sign cutting,  
17 traffic check points, transportation check which is at  
18 the airports, the bus depots, the train depots, air  
19 operations, marine patrol, horse and bike patrols and  
20 also our canine program.

21 The National Border Patrol's attitude is  
22 prevention through deterrence which is a lot different  
23 than what we used to do before. It was a cat and mouse  
24 game. Now, it's prevention through deterrence. It's a  
25 multi-year approach where we intend to gain, maintain

1 and extend control of the United States and Mexican  
2 border.

3                   We currently have four operations in  
4 effect. The first one was started in 1993 by Chief  
5 Reyes in El Paso, Texas known as Operation Hold the  
6 Line. After Hold the Line we went to San Diego, El  
7 Centro and Yuma and began Operation Gatekeeper. And in  
8 Tucson with Operation Safeguard. And in 1997 -- August  
9 of 1997 Operation Rio Grande which encompasses Marfa,  
10 Laredo, Del Rio and McAllen sectors.

11                   Along the southwest border in fiscal year  
12 1998 which began October 1st of 1997 and ended  
13 September 30th of this year, the Border Patrol  
14 apprehended 1,516,679 aliens of which the McAllen  
15 sector was responsible for 204,256 aliens.

16                   In this fiscal year I believe McAllen has  
17 approximately 1,088 agents which you can see is a  
18 significant increase from fiscal year 1992 where they  
19 only had 412. And all indications are that they will  
20 see an increase in man power this fiscal year which  
21 began October 1st.

22                   As I mentioned earlier the Border Patrol  
23 is designated as a primary law enforcement agency  
24 responsible for narcotics interdiction along the border  
25 through the ports-of-entry. In 1997 the Border Patrol



1 was responsible for 52 percent of all narcotics  
2 apprehensions. When you take all the total law  
3 enforcement agencies that work along the border we  
4 apprehended 52 percent of all narcotics.

5 In fiscal year in 1998 the Border Patrol  
6 was responsible for 1,734 drug seizures along the  
7 southwest border of which 264,000 -- excuse me, in  
8 McAllen -- that was the McAllen sector of which 264,581  
9 pounds of marijuana were seized, 6,142 pounds of  
10 cocaine for a combined street value of \$410,884,459.  
11 Nationwide the Border Patrol has seized 22,000 --  
12 excuse me, 22,675 pounds of cocaine and 871,417 pounds  
13 of marijuana. As you can see we have been very  
14 successful in our narcotics interdiction efforts and  
15 also in our alien apprehensions and deterrence.

16 I want to highlight some significant  
17 seizures that have occurred in the McAllen sector area.  
18 And I say they are significant however they are not  
19 unusual. The McAllen sector historically has been the  
20 leader in narcotics apprehensions. On July 13th of  
21 this year agents seized 2,501 pounds of marijuana in  
22 Brownsville with the street value of \$2,000,800.  
23 Again, on July 17th agents in Rio Grande City seized  
24 1,674 pounds of marijuana with a street value of  
25 \$1,339,000. On August 11th agents in McAllen seized

1 1,469 pounds of cocaine with a street value of  
2 \$47,025,200. And on August 16th agents in Mercedes  
3 seized 1,136 pounds of marijuana with a street value of  
4 \$908,880. And on September 19th agents in Mercedes,  
5 again, seized 1,104 pounds of marijuana with a street  
6 value of \$883,200.

7 We feel that we have been very successful  
8 in our operations because of the efforts of the agents  
9 and our strategy and also the assistance that we have  
10 received from Joint Task Force Six in building an  
11 infrastructure that has helped us gain and maintain  
12 control south of the border. And we look forward to  
13 JTF-6. Their assistance to us has saved the INS and  
14 the American tax payers millions and millions of  
15 dollars. And, again, we look forward to working with  
16 them in securing our borders. And with that I would  
17 like to introduce Lieutenant Colonel Mike Rossi.

18 MR. ROSSI: Good evening, ladies and  
19 gentlemen. I'm Lieutenant Colonel Mike Rossi. I'm the  
20 Staff Engineer at Joint Task Force Six. I'm pleased by  
21 the turn out tonight considering the Cowboys are on  
22 Monday Night Football. I would figure there wouldn't  
23 be quite this much interest tonight. So welcome. And  
24 let me tell you that the purpose I'm here is to provide  
25 you an overview of how Joint Task Force Six works at

1 the direction of the president and congress to fight  
2 drugs in our neighborhoods. By the end of this  
3 presentation I hope that you will get a greater  
4 understanding of our organization, our mission and how  
5 we support the various federal, state and local law  
6 enforcement agencies in stopping or fighting the flow  
7 of drugs in our communities.

8 Well, this is the sequence of my brief  
9 tonight. I'm going to start with the national drug  
10 control strategy and the goal put forth by the  
11 President of the United States. I'll explain the  
12 involvement of the Department of Defense with Joint  
13 Task Force Six in fighting drugs. I'll present to you  
14 Joint Task Force Six's mission. Then I'll outline  
15 Joint Task Force Six and the Department of Defense's  
16 unique relationship with the law enforcement agencies  
17 and every single type of support we provide.

18 These statistics you see before you  
19 provide a broad overview of the national drug problem.  
20 As you can see illegal drug use is responsible for a  
21 significant amount of criminal activity. It also  
22 proposes a serious threat to public safety and a  
23 problem for the government at all levels. An estimated  
24 \$83 billion per year spent by the governmental agencies  
25 to address drug related problems. And \$67 billion goes

1 towards social programs as education and drug  
2 treatment. The balance of that \$83 billion -- that \$16  
3 billion is spent towards law enforcement efforts every  
4 year.

5 Well, all this has a trickle down effect.  
6 As you can see drugs, in fact, impact on the  
7 productivity of our work force. It disrupts the  
8 educational system in our country. It has a  
9 significant impact on law enforcement in our  
10 neighborhoods. It adversely effects our families. And  
11 it places a burden on our health care system. To  
12 address these issues the office of Drug Control Policy  
13 working at the direction of the President and  
14 formulated as a national drug control strategy. This  
15 strategy defines our national plan to combat and treat  
16 drug use and assigns goals and objectives by which we  
17 can measure the success for our efforts.

18 These are the goals laid out by the  
19 strategy in February of 1998. The Department of  
20 Defense and Joint Task Force Six contributed to the  
21 obtaining of the goals in the following three areas.  
22 We provide support to law enforcement efforts to reduce  
23 drug-related crime and violence. We help shield  
24 American's land, sea and air frontiers. And we aid in  
25 breaking foreign, domestic sources of supply. As you

1 can see at the bottom of the slide, the national  
2 objective is to reduce drug use and availability by 50  
3 percent by the year 2007.

4 Now, I will talk to you about the mission  
5 of Joint Task Force Six. Joint Task Force Six is a  
6 Department of Defense task force that established in  
7 1989 to support law enforcement agencies along the  
8 southwest border. Since 1989 our responsibilities have  
9 grown to encompass all 48 of the continental United  
10 States. The states in the continent of the United  
11 States. Our main focus of our support effort remain in  
12 the four southwest border states where 80 percent of  
13 our efforts has gone. Our most recent risk mission  
14 station approved earlier this year reads as follows:  
15 "Joint Task Force Six synchronizes and integrates the  
16 Department of Defense operational, technological,  
17 training and intelligence support to drug law  
18 enforcement agencies counter-drug efforts in the  
19 continental United States to reduce the availability of  
20 illegal drugs in the continental United States."

21 This slide shows the specific legislation  
22 by which congress established Joint Task Force Six.  
23 These laws also provide the legal constraints under  
24 which we operate. In summary they authorize the  
25 Department of Defense to conduct training exercises in

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22 by which congress established Joint Task Force Six.  
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24 which we operate. In summary they authorize the  
25 Department of Defense to conduct training exercises in

1 drug interdiction areas, to provide support for the  
2 counter-drug effort and to assist in the detention and  
3 monitoring across the border smuggling activities.

4                   These are the restrictions under which we  
5 operate. I'm going to walk you down the slide because  
6 I don't want to miss anything. Then I'll talk in some  
7 detail on each of these. First of all, our support  
8 must -- only comes at the written request of law  
9 enforcement. With that written request we have to have  
10 a clearly articulated counter-drug method for linking,  
11 drugs have to be involved. All Joint Task Force Six  
12 activities must be part of the Posse Comitatus Act  
13 which prohibits the use of United States Military  
14 Forces for domestic police functions. We may not  
15 violate the sanctity of the United States and Mexico  
16 border. We must follow the rules of engagement which  
17 only allow the use of force in self defense. Currently  
18 no Joint Task Force Six operations are authorized to  
19 carry weapons. No soldiers on the Joint Task Force Six  
20 mission in about the past year plus had to carry  
21 weapons. All securities provided in this past year and  
22 a half had supported law enforcement agencies. We are  
23 prohibited from collecting and maintaining information  
24 on U.S. persons to undergo independent intelligence  
25 oversight inspections that insure compliance. We may

1 conduct no operations on private land without the  
2 expressed permission of the private land owner. Our  
3 funds can only be expended on the counter-drug efforts.  
4 Our ground missions, which I will describe later, are  
5 currently under suspension by order of the Secretary of  
6 Defense. We still provide a large -- a wide range of  
7 operational training engineer and general support  
8 however to the law enforcement agencies in their  
9 counter-drug effort. Well, this slide is pretty much  
10 the executive summary of all the restrictions I just  
11 talked to you about.

12 In summary we provide support but we are  
13 not police or police officers. We do not search people  
14 or property. We do not seize contraband or make  
15 arrests.

16 What this slide shows is the process that  
17 we go through when we receive a written request for law  
18 enforcement agencies for support. All requests are  
19 processed through Operational Alliance and that's an  
20 agency made up of federal, state and local law  
21 enforcement representatives who validate the present  
22 nexus or linkage and provide us with our working  
23 priorities. Joint Task Force Six then conducts an  
24 independent legal review. And once the mission is  
25 approved by our commander then our commander will



1 solicit for volunteer units. These units sign up for  
2 the training benefit they receive which closely matches  
3 specific training skills required for their wartime  
4 admission. As an example I will give you an engineer  
5 mission. We would, for example, get a request from the  
6 Border Patrol to improve an existing road along the  
7 border to better help them have access to the border or  
8 to patrol the border. We will solicit a volunteer unit  
9 such as an engineer unit that says, look, I need to  
10 practice my craft of building a road. This is  
11 something that you would expect them to do if you were  
12 appointing them to Saudi Arabia or other parts of the  
13 world doing the nation's business. And what -- that  
14 right there we can get a win win by helping a law  
15 enforcement agency and training the soldiers to do  
16 their mission. The mission is then planned and briefed  
17 for approval to Joint Task Force Six and the law  
18 enforcement agency. The formal orders are issued to  
19 begin the process and they begin the support mission.  
20 After each operation we conduct an after action review  
21 in which the unit back briefs the law enforcement  
22 agency and Joint Task Force Six so we can capture any  
23 lessons learned for the next time we conduct a mission.

24 On this slide I'll walk you through the  
25 Operational Support Missions of Joint Task Force Six.

1 The missions you will see on the slide depicted in red  
2 are the missions currently under suspension. Ground  
3 Observation Recon is using military forces to watch  
4 smuggling routes or patrol remote areas to locate  
5 marijuana plants or narcotic labs. As I said this type  
6 of mission is currently suspended. Aerial observation  
7 is using the Department of Defense aircraft to spot  
8 drug growing areas or labs and to monitor smuggling  
9 corridors. Pilots passed all information they gather  
10 on any activities directly to the law enforcement  
11 agency for action. Sensor missions involve monitoring  
12 smuggling corridors to detect or report smuggling  
13 corridors and then they detect and report that activity  
14 to law enforcement agencies. Those are currently under  
15 suspension also. So for the first three missions they  
16 are basically the same antedate. They are still  
17 monitoring smuggling areas and smuggling routes. It's  
18 just that the means are different in each case. The  
19 first case they are people on the ground. On the  
20 second case there is an aerial platform such as a  
21 helicopter. Then in the third case there is an  
22 electronic sensor but the means are the same, gathering  
23 information and passing them to the law enforcement  
24 agency. In this case here we have the Border Patrol  
25 through Customs. And it can be through the local

1 sheriff for them to do their police business. We also  
2 provide medical evacuation support and transportation  
3 supplies and equipment. The last bullet says control  
4 delivery. And I can best describe that by an example.  
5 Often a law enforcement agency will request our support  
6 in moving captured drugs from the point of arrest --  
7 the point of seizure to the smuggling destination in  
8 order to make arrests. And in order to better explain  
9 that the law enforcement agency, just for example --  
10 say customs will make an arrest at the port-of-entry  
11 and the arrest will be a vehicle and narcotics. And  
12 they find out that those drugs or that vehicle is  
13 destined for Chicago, for example. In which case they  
14 would enlist the support -- they would request Joint  
15 Task Force Six in support to say let us move those --  
16 that vehicle and those narcotics to Chicago at its  
17 appointed date and time so as we can make the arrest on  
18 the receiving end of the operation. In other words, to  
19 break up the ring and or get further into the ring. We  
20 provide them with the transportation to move vehicles  
21 in a seized drug load under law enforcement  
22 supervision. We do not get involved with the chain of  
23 custody of any evidence.

24 Joint Task Force Six provides a wide  
25 range of assessment services to include project

1 designs, surveys, cost estimating, environmental  
2 assessments and master planning for the infrastructure.  
3 Our primary construction missions are border roads,  
4 fences and lights between the ports-of-entry all along  
5 the southwest border. We also construct training  
6 operational facilities such as small arm ranges,  
7 vehicle maintenance facilities, checkpoints and other  
8 structures throughout the United States at the request  
9 of the law enforcement agencies.

10                Mobile training teams are a small groups  
11 of subject matter experts requested by law enforcement  
12 agencies to provide classroom instruction with  
13 practical -- with practical instruction. We provide  
14 150 training teams per year in subjects such as  
15 medical, firearms, intelligence, language and planning  
16 techniques. Specialized training is coordinated by  
17 JTF-6 but provided by the United States Army Military  
18 Police School. Examples of their specialized training  
19 would include tactical police operations and special  
20 reaction team techniques. We also participate in  
21 technology sharing efforts with law enforcement  
22 agencies. Examples would be sensors, night vision  
23 devices and protection technology.

24                This is my last slide and it -- and this  
25 is our goal in Joint Task Force Six, where a dedicated

1 organization is drawing from all four services  
2 committed to the service of our nation. And it's also  
3 committed to supporting our law enforcement agencies in  
4 their counter-drug effort.

5 Now, this concludes my formal briefing.  
6 I'll be followed by Mr. Chris Ingram who will discuss  
7 the progressional problems with the National  
8 Environment Protection Act. Thank you for your  
9 attention.

10 MR. INGRAM: Thank you Colonel Rossi. My  
11 role tonight is to explain the National Environment  
12 Policy Act or NEPA, as it's commonly called, the  
13 requirements under NEPA -- that act and the procedures  
14 and what INS, JTF-6 is required to do. NEPA was first  
15 passed by the U.S. Congress in 1969 and it has a  
16 multiple purpose. First of all, it provides full  
17 disclosure to the public of any activities that a  
18 federal agency is undertaking. It allows public  
19 participation in the decision making process and  
20 provides objective accurate data to the decision makers  
21 so they can make a better informed decision.

22 NEPA requires that any federal agency  
23 before they undertake an action or before they commit  
24 significant resources to a proposed action that they  
25 consider preparing an event document. There is

1 three -- generally three levels of environment for  
2 consideration. First is a categorical exclusion, very  
3 minor projects. The next is an environmental  
4 assessment which provides a little more detail. And  
5 the third, as in this case, is an environmental impact  
6 statement. And whenever an environmental impact  
7 statement is being prepared NEPA and the President's  
8 Council on Environmental Quality requires that scoping  
9 be initiated. Which, of course, is what we're doing  
10 here tonight.

11                   The NEPA process is briefly shown here.  
12 Again, the federal agency identifies a need or a  
13 problem. And then they start formulating possible  
14 alternative actions that would satisfy that need or  
15 resolve that problem or issue. If, as in this case,  
16 the EIS is being prepared a notice of intent has to be  
17 published in the federal register. The notice of  
18 intent for this EIS was published on August 28th which  
19 initiated the public scoping process. And as Ron  
20 mentioned earlier this is the eighth of ten public  
21 scoping meetings we're doing all along the U.S.-Mexico  
22 border. We will gather your comments from these  
23 scoping meetings as well as -- all the way up to  
24 December 16th. We will incorporate them into our  
25 evaluation and we will prepare a draft document that

1 will be issued to the public for review and comment for  
2 a minimum of 45 days. We will then gather more  
3 comments. We will prepare the final EIS and that too  
4 will be released to the public for comment and review  
5 after which the record of the decision will be  
6 published.

7 All the NEPA documents that INS, JTF-6 as  
8 well as any other federal agency prepares has to comply  
9 with numerous federal and state statutes and  
10 regulations not the least of which is NEPA. Other ones  
11 are the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic  
12 Preservation Act, numerous executive orders such as  
13 Executive Order 12898 which has to do with  
14 Environmental Justice, as well as various other state  
15 statutes, pertinent applications, et cetera.

16 INS and JTF-6 are complying with NEPA and  
17 the other environmental statutes in several different  
18 ways. First of all, in 1994 they issued the final  
19 programmatic EIS and record decision for the entire  
20 border area. This described their entire program and  
21 projected the impacts as well as all the projects for a  
22 five year period. Since then they have been doing  
23 sites-specific or projects-specific to environmental  
24 assessments which have tiered to that '94 document.  
25 Most of those projects have required that cultural

1 biological surveys be performed whenever a project is  
2 identified and the environmental assessment is being  
3 prepared. Many of the projects, particularly the large  
4 engineering made from construction projects, have  
5 required on-site professional archaeologist or  
6 biologist monitoring the efforts to ensure that no  
7 senseless resources are impacted.

8                   Now, as I mentioned they prepared this  
9 final Programmatic EIS in '94 that projected what the  
10 projects were going to be and the impacts associated  
11 with those projects for a five year period and that  
12 window is going to close next year. So INS and JTF-6  
13 elected to start early to update or supplement their  
14 Programmatic EIS. This programmatic EIS will be  
15 formatted in a similar fashion as the '94 documents.  
16 And that the baseline or existing conditions will be  
17 addressed in five separate technical support documents.  
18 These technical support documents will focus primarily  
19 along the 50 mile corridor where most of the INS and  
20 JTF-6 activities occur. But they will also address the  
21 rest of the four southwestern states.

22                   Some of the goals of the Supplemental  
23 Programmatic EIS is to identify the types of INS  
24 activities and JTF-6 activities that will occur over  
25 the next five years. And, again, I want to emphasize



1 they are types of projects because right now we cannot  
2 identify specific projects or specific project  
3 notifications over the next five year period. We will  
4 describe in generic or general terms the types of  
5 impacts that are expected from these type of projects.  
6 And we will compare what we projected were going to be  
7 the impacts as well as the number of projects in '94,  
8 what really happened so we can extrapolate that out for  
9 the next five years which will provide a more accurate  
10 picture of the program.

11           Some of the benefits of doing it this way  
12 is that once again it does provide full disclosure to  
13 the public of not only what we expect to happen over  
14 the next five years but we're going to go back and look  
15 at what's happening over the previous five years. It  
16 eliminates repetitive discussions through the tiering  
17 process which saves the tax payers time and monies, and  
18 it provides an accurate assessment of the entire  
19 program, not only during the next five years but what  
20 is happening over the five years previous and the  
21 projected time frame. And just as importantly it  
22 maintains some coordination with resource agencies and  
23 provides them with some very valuable data that may not  
24 have gathered through other means.

25           I want to emphasize though that this

1 supplemental Programmatic EIS would not allow INS or  
2 JTF-6, Border Patrol or anyone else to conduct a  
3 project without proper compliance with NEPA, the  
4 National Historic Preservation Act, the Endangered  
5 Species Act and all the other federal and state  
6 statutes and regulations that are applicable.

7 Our schedule as it now stands, as I  
8 mentioned, the notice of intent was published in the  
9 public register on August 28th which initiated this  
10 scoping process. We will accept comments through  
11 December 16th. We plan to have a draft of the  
12 supplemental PEIS out in February of '99 for the public  
13 to view for a minimum of 45 days. And then the final  
14 should be revised and submitted for public review in  
15 September of '99 and hopefully with a record of  
16 decision by November of 1999.

17 That concludes my presentation. I'll  
18 turn the floor back over to Ron Ruffennack who will  
19 give the ground rules for our comment session. Thank  
20 you.

21 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, Chris.

22 May I have the lights back on, please.

23 You will notice we have a Court Reporter  
24 up here documenting this meeting as we have in the case  
25 of all the other meetings we have held on this subject.

1 The Court Reporter will take your comments tonight and  
2 they, again, will become a part of the public -- excuse  
3 me, the PEIS.

4           When you registered you were asked  
5 whether or not you wanted to make a statement. And at  
6 this point in time I have seven people who have  
7 indicated that they would like to speak. Again, this  
8 portion of it is to take public comment. Again, your  
9 comments will be limited to five minutes. Specific  
10 questions will not be addressed during this time.  
11 However, we encourage you strongly to meet with folks  
12 after this meeting. Again, the Court Reporter will be  
13 asked to stay on if there are any additional comments  
14 that you would like to add once you talk to some of the  
15 people about some specifics. Or, again, you can  
16 provide your comments for consideration to PEIS, as we  
17 said, through December 16th.

18           When you come to the microphone I'll ask  
19 that you state your name very clearly. Speak directly  
20 into these mics because these mics are directional mics  
21 so the Court Reporter can get every word of your  
22 statement. If you are representing a specific  
23 organization we would ask that you state the name of  
24 that organization as well. The first speaker or in  
25 this case speakers, it's unclear as to who will speak,

1 is John and Audrey Martin.

2 MR. MARTIN: I get to be first?

3 MR. RUFFENNACK: You signed in first. We  
4 take them in the order that you signed in.

5 MR. MARTIN: Yeah. I guess mainly ---

6 MR. RUFFENNACK: Please, you need to come  
7 to the mic.

8 MR. MARTIN: Oh.

9 MR. RUFFENNACK: Again, restate your name  
10 if you would please. And then tell us if you're  
11 representing anyone.

12 MR. MARTIN: Well, I'm John Martin. I'm  
13 a private citizen. I'm part of the business community.  
14 I've been an investment broker for 20 years in the  
15 Valley. I have lived in the Valley since 1973. And in  
16 general I've supported all of your -- all of the border  
17 activities in the Border Patrol. But I have also been  
18 involved in helping put together the wildlife  
19 corridors. And I have watched tens of thousands of  
20 hours go into trying to create the most unique refuge  
21 in the country and I'm -- I have some concerns. I have  
22 some questions because I didn't hear any specifics.  
23 One of the things that I understand was that we're  
24 looking at like 50 miles of lighting along the river.  
25 I don't know. I don't know what I'm addressing here in

1 terms of the potential of damage to the environment.  
2 Am I accurate when we're talking about 50 miles of  
3 lighting along the river? I don't know. Can anybody  
4 answer that?

5 MR. RUFFENNACK: Again, sir, we have  
6 rules. We can address those questions afterwards.  
7 Now, is there something you want to raise?

8 MR. MARTIN: I would like to ask that  
9 question. How many miles of lighting along the river  
10 are we looking at?

11 MR. RUFFENNACK: Once, again, sir, this  
12 is not a dialogue for Q's and A's. This is just to  
13 take your comments.

14 MR. MARTIN: Well, I guess I'm going to  
15 make the assumption then that we're talking about 50  
16 miles of lighting along the river. And I don't know if  
17 that's accurate or not. I have concerns that we've  
18 spent \$70 millions for a wildlife refuge along the  
19 river that has critical habitats that is going to be  
20 disrupted by these activities. And I have watched  
21 thousands of hours go together to put it in place only  
22 to potentially have it destroyed. And I can only lean  
23 towards that Fish & Wildlife will be allowed to tell  
24 you what is appropriate and what's not. But if in the  
25 long run this is successful then I would suggest that

1 we probably need 100 to \$200 million in mitigating  
2 funds to acquire additional land so that we can have  
3 the wildlife corridor. And that's my statement.

4 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

5 two things I failed to mention before our  
6 first speaker. My co-worker will be timing the five  
7 minutes and will give you a polite raise of her hand to  
8 indicate when you're getting within about 30 seconds of  
9 your time.

10 Also for purposes of trying to stay on  
11 subject matter tonight, these are the broad categories  
12 of scoping issues that are looked at and the PEIS is  
13 going to be written. So we would like for you to  
14 attempt to try to keep your comments related to those  
15 subject areas. However, of course, anything that you  
16 might consider -- again, raising the question of the  
17 number of miles that will be addressed as well in a  
18 document -- that definitely will be answered later on  
19 this evening by somebody that can address that.

20 Thank you Mr. Martin.

21 Our next speaker is a Nathan Selzer.

22 MR. SELZER: I'll just do my comments in  
23 writing.

24 MR. RUFFENNACK: I'm sorry, sir?

25 MR. SELZER: I'll do my comment in

1 writing.

2 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you.

3 Our next speaker is Rogelio Nunez.

4 MR. NUNEZ: Good evening. My name is  
5 Rogelio Nunez and I represent Casa De Proyecto Libertad  
6 in Harlingen, Texas. I'm here to comment on this  
7 presentation and to remind you that the presence of the  
8 military at the border is not welcome on this  
9 southwestern border as is specified today. I'm here to  
10 remind you also that Ezequiel Hernandez was killed by  
11 the military on May the 20th of 1997.

12 And that in terms of your scoping issues,  
13 the closer resources need to be defined beyond our  
14 cultural aspect. That there is a national  
15 deterioration of human beings on the southwestern  
16 border as people come through and as people who have  
17 lived here for centuries. Thank you.

18 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, sir.

19 Our next speaker is Larry Ditto.

20 MR. DITTO: I'm Larry Ditto. I work for  
21 the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services. I'm the project  
22 leader for the lower Rio Grande Valley at the Santa  
23 Anna National Wildlife Refuge. I have a number of  
24 comments. The first of which would be that -- to say  
25 that we have had a pretty good history during the last

1 year of coordination between the Fish & Wildlife  
2 Service and the Border Patrol. And that while there is  
3 still a number of issues that need to be worked out,  
4 one of the things that I would like to talk about  
5 addresses that. And that would be that we have -- from  
6 my level working primarily with the chiefs and  
7 assistant chiefs and at the same time we are  
8 coordinating there are thousands or hundreds at least  
9 of agents out in the field working up and down the  
10 river.

11               So the problems that I am seeing that  
12 we're having -- now one of the problem is that the  
13 ability to pass information down to those guys that are  
14 actually out there working in the field that are  
15 actually out there in the wildlife refuge along the  
16 river corridor area there. I would like to suggest  
17 that as part of this PEIS that you include an  
18 educational -- I guess I don't know what you call it --  
19 an educational package in there if you will. Something  
20 that allows for us to ensure that the agents are  
21 properly trained to be sensitive to the cultural and  
22 ecological issues along the area they are working in.  
23 It's very difficult for a very small agency like the  
24 Fish & Wildlife Service to be able to provide the one  
25 on one opportunity. We would like to have face to face



1 with the agents out there. Although it hasn't been  
2 offered we would like the opportunity. We simply  
3 aren't able to do that. So maybe the PEIS can  
4 incorporate that in this.

5 I would like to say also that the natural  
6 resources in this part of the world are among the most  
7 diverse of any place in the U.S. We have more species  
8 of plants and animals than any other place in the U.S.  
9 in these four counties of Texas because of the river is  
10 there. That's what attracts most of the wildlife and  
11 plant species. So the Fish & Wildlife Service has come  
12 to the river. We didn't just go out and create a  
13 refuge. We inevitably came to a place where the great  
14 biological diversity was and it was already very much  
15 threatened by habitat fragmentation. So we're putting  
16 together a wildlife refuge that consists of corridor of  
17 habitats that run about -- hopefully it will run about  
18 290 river miles from Falcon Dam to the Gulf of Mexico.  
19 So that means that we will be out there working  
20 shoulder to shoulder with the Border Patrol along the  
21 river area doing our thing to restore habitats and  
22 protect habitats and or species. And those resources  
23 have a tremendous economic impact on the area besides  
24 being an environmental resource that we certainly want  
25 to protect. About \$90 million a year comes into the

1 local economy here in Hidalgo and Cameron counties just  
2 from bird watching. I have no idea of what the total  
3 of that is for all the other outdoor related  
4 recreational activities but certainly this is a growing  
5 natural pastime. And I would like to just add that to  
6 the record so that we're sensitive to the economy and  
7 business of having a wildlife habitat directly along  
8 the river. Thank you.

9 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, sir.

10 Our next speaker is Mr. Roy Brooks.

11 MR. BROOKS: My name is Roy Brooks. And  
12 I want to echo some previous comments about  
13 appreciation of the job these guys are doing on the  
14 border. I grew up with my next door neighbor was a  
15 border patrol agent. A man who taught me how to shoot  
16 and a man that I admired very much. And there are  
17 people who are on the Border Patrol today that I admire  
18 very much. So don't take this personally but I just  
19 want to say that INS policy is atrocious.

20 The proposed action cannot be begun until  
21 the ESA consultation is completed, and the final  
22 environmental assessment is completed, yet INS is  
23 already putting up lights and fences.

24 Twenty river miles of vegetation was  
25 burned this past summer, some of it on National

1 Wildlife Refuge land. I don't know whether that was an  
2 INS action.

3 But ESA consultations should begin now  
4 because it's only now that the full scope, if indeed  
5 this is the full scope, is becoming known, the INS  
6 plan. And it's only now that we can begin to try to  
7 predict and assess the enormous impact of this proposed  
8 action.

9 INS needs to remove all the lights that  
10 are illegally placed. I understand that some of these  
11 have been repositioned, the ones that were set up in  
12 the palm grove but border bandits are coming cross at  
13 night and stealing generators and everything else. And  
14 I believe that's all those lights are doing. So they  
15 have pulled them back to the levy I think and maybe  
16 more of those lights have been removed. But they all  
17 need to be removed because they're violating the law.

18 INS agents may not mow vegetation, may  
19 not burn vegetation, may not clear vegetation.

20 INS policy makers are either showing  
21 incredible contempt or incredible ignorance or maybe  
22 some of both for the painstaking 20 years of effort  
23 that's gone into putting the wildlife border together  
24 here along this final 200 miles of the Rio Grande.

25 The Lower Rio Grande National Wildlife

1 Refuge protects more endangered species, more  
2 threatened species and more species of concern than any  
3 other refuge in North America. The Lower Rio Grande  
4 National Wildlife Refuge protects a wider biodiversity  
5 of plants and animals than the Everglades, than  
6 Yellowstone, than any other national park or national  
7 wildlife refuge in North America.

8               This draft of the environmental  
9 assessment is grossly inadequate and, in places, its  
10 grossly wrong. For example, I think it's on page 6-1  
11 where it states: "The proposed project has been  
12 coordinated by the Fish & Wildlife Service. And no  
13 unresolved issues remain." That's absolutely false.  
14 There is almost a total lack of careful examination of  
15 the biological effects of turning night into day along  
16 50 miles, John, of river edge and river levee. What  
17 will be the effects on nocturnal bats and other small  
18 mammals, on moths, birds, reptiles and amphibians?

19               For the unavoidable impacts, and their  
20 are going to be a lot of them, what mitigation is going  
21 to be carried out? In the Sierra Club who I represent,  
22 and I will be glad to say, opposes any fences in or  
23 along any state or federal wildlife refuge area or  
24 along any of the 10 meter strip along the river edge  
25 that IBWC agreed to in a 1995 settlement not to mow.

1                   If INS policy makers have their way, they  
2 will turn our wildlife corridor into a biologically  
3 barren concentration camp perimeter.

4                   The Rio Grande Valley, this proposed  
5 project as proposed constitutes a major federal action.  
6 And the Rio Grande Valley is not a generic area. An  
7 environmental assessment is not adequate. A complete  
8 environmental impact statement must be done. Thank you  
9 very much.

10                  MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, sir.

11                  Our next speaker is Ernesto Reyes.

12                  MR. REYES: Well, my name is Ernesto  
13 Reyes. I'm with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the  
14 ecological services. And my job is the regulatory park  
15 compared to the refuges. What that does is that all  
16 federal actions, federal properties involvement have to  
17 come through us for approval. And we've dealt with  
18 some of these beginning projects. And we've always  
19 said -- written back in a letter saying that we wanted  
20 to look at the whole picture of the environmental  
21 assessment so we can look at all the chemical effects.  
22 And I have not looked at the environmental assessment  
23 that we just received a couple of weeks ago. But we  
24 will provide brief comments on the -- on what the EA  
25 has got to say on this Operation Rio Grande.

1                   And I just want to say that 95 percent of  
2 the habitat has been lost along the Rio Grande Valley  
3 and there is only five percent left that we're trying  
4 to conserve and protect and try to recover some of the  
5 species. There are about 20 species that are  
6 endangered here in the Valley alone. It's a very  
7 diverse habitat. So we have to look at the whole  
8 picture and not just sections of it here and there. So  
9 we will provide, like I said, brief comments on this  
10 environmental assessment according to the Endangered  
11 Species Act under Section 7. That's all I wanted to  
12 say. Thank you.

13                   MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, very much.

14                   Our last speaker who preregistered for  
15 the meeting is Bobby, and I'm going to try to pronounce  
16 his last name, Elizande.

17                   MR. ELIZANDE: (No audible answer).

18                   MR. RUFFENNACK: Okay. That concludes  
19 the number of people who preregistered to speak for  
20 this meeting. Is there anyone who would like to make a  
21 comment? And I'll open the floor up for that at this  
22 point in time.

23                   Okay. Ma'am, if you would please like to  
24 come to the microphone, and state your name, and,  
25 again, if you're representing any organization.

1 MS. OCHOA-DRUEGER: My name is Ninfa  
2 Ochoa-Drueger and I'm speaking as a citizen. One of  
3 the things that I'm very concerned about is that we  
4 citizens really do not even know what the plan is. And  
5 aside from the environmental concerns which are great,  
6 we also have big economic impact with tourism. And we  
7 don't really know what or how many military personnel  
8 will be here and what they will be doing and how  
9 visible they will be. And so the economic impact  
10 because of that lack of knowledge is a concern for us.  
11 Thank you.

12 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you. Anyone else?  
13 Okay. Come up, please.

14 MR. LONGORIA: My name is Arturo Longoria  
15 and I'm a private citizen. There is two issues here --  
16 and, by the way, I have friends that are on the Border  
17 Patrol. They are stationed in San Angelo. And I don't  
18 know why the Border Patrol has people way up there.

19 Anyway there is two issues here. On the  
20 one hand there is the Border Patrol that wants to stop  
21 the inflow of people coming into the United States  
22 illegally. And there is a side issue about drugs and,  
23 of course, that's a losing issue. And I don't know why  
24 you want to concentrate on that but that's a war that's  
25 been lost 20 years ago. Unfortunately what the Border

1 Patrol is doing is that they're -- for whatever reason  
2 they've got this incredible tunnel vision. There are  
3 problems that we're facing here now much greater than  
4 just the influx of people illegally in the United  
5 States.

6               One of the things you talked about, a  
7 recommendation -- let me tell you something just real  
8 quickly about some of the other problems we're having  
9 here. We have altered meteorological events throughout  
10 the world and particularly in South Texas by what we  
11 have done here in the Valley. As Ernesto said, 95  
12 percent of the habitat -- well, actually some people  
13 suggested as much as 97 percent of the habitat in South  
14 Texas has been destroyed. We have abnormal energy  
15 flows, thermodynamics are all red. Now, I don't want  
16 to get into the esoterics of science here but we've got  
17 major problems here with certification and making  
18 desserts, lack of rainfall, pollution and all kinds of  
19 things that are effecting us that are perhaps even  
20 greater problems than what you're facing with the  
21 inflow of people in the United States.

22               The other problem we're having here is  
23 that agriculture is being faced with the biggest  
24 dilemma that they've ever faced and that's the loss of  
25 pollinators. The native bee population in the United



1 States is down by 80 percent. There has been legions  
2 of research on this already. The European honey bee  
3 population is down by 50 percent. Our wasps, and  
4 moths, and bees that are so essential for our culture  
5 are being wiped out. Now, we've got 97 percent of our  
6 habitat gone but we have the means. There is this  
7 little thin corridor here along the river that's going  
8 to feed you and that includes the Border Patrol and the  
9 army too. And if you go in there and you start  
10 fragmenting the habitat even more then you're going to  
11 reduce our pollinators even more.

12               You've talked about -- one of your people  
13 here from Brownsville had another meeting, and it was  
14 not too long ago, said the Border Patrol is interested  
15 in the quality of life. Well, if you are indeed  
16 interested in the quality of life then you will look at  
17 a compromise. And it will be a good issue for your  
18 public relations people. You can say the U.S. Border  
19 Patrol is cognizance of the cultural needs, the  
20 agricultural needs and the biological needs of the  
21 area. So instead of decimating all the work that's  
22 been done along the river, why don't you drop back to  
23 the military highway or to the levees and put your  
24 lights, your thermo-imaging and all your other sensors  
25 there. Then you can write a good report and come out

1 on the TV and say, look, we know that there are these  
2 valuable habitats and these greater issues that are --  
3 that we have to face and deal with. And the Border  
4 Patrol is going to get back. We're going to accomplish  
5 our job but we're not going to just destroy everything  
6 in the process. Think about it. It will be a good  
7 P.R. point to raise. Thank you.

8 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, sir.

9 Not hearing any other -- excuse me. All  
10 right. I do have a couple more folks.

11 MR. ANDERSON: My name is Phil Anderson.  
12 I work with Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service and  
13 I'm based in Washington, D.C. I happen to be in your  
14 area at the moment as a visitor and as someone who is  
15 looking at the question of immigration particularly  
16 along the southern border. And I just want to manifest  
17 that some agencies of the church and churches at large  
18 within the United States are seeing the whole question  
19 of the U.S.-Mexico southern border as one of the key  
20 issues for the United States as a nation to resolve.

21 And I think one of the wisest things that  
22 I have heard over the last year is that the dilemma has  
23 been that we have seen the border as a line, which is  
24 an arbitrary line as it were, a political line without  
25 respect to the culture of the people on both sides,

1 without respect to the agriculture and the business  
2 flow, the ecology. And what we need is a wiser way of  
3 understanding the borders and the dynamics of people  
4 and ecology and business. And so this is very  
5 enlightening to me to just see how we are increasingly  
6 focusing on the rigidity of relying without taking into  
7 account some of these border issues.

8                   The Evangelical Lutheran Church of  
9 America will come out with a pastoral message within  
10 the next couple of weeks in which it identifies the  
11 U.S.-Mexico border as one of the key issues for us as a  
12 church to address. So I think I just want people to be  
13 aware that churches in the U.S., Catholic, Protestant,  
14 Evangelical and others in the Jewish community with  
15 whom I am in contact, want to accompany this process in  
16 dialogue so that there can be win win situations both  
17 for human beings as well as for our earth. Thank you.

18                   MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, sir.

19                   Ma'am, did you ---

20                   MS. GARDNER: My name is Linda Gardner.

21 I'm here as a private citizen. I live in Edinburg,  
22 Texas. For the past nine years I have taught science  
23 at a McAllen Middle School. We have done many things  
24 there, planting trees, protecting the environment. And  
25 I have become very concerned ---

1 MR. RUFFENNACK: I just need you to stay  
2 real close to the mic.

3 MS. GARDNER: And I have worked on the  
4 wildlife corridor nearly going on 20 years. What you  
5 guys are planning to do here is totally unacceptable.  
6 The science of this is before a station reduces  
7 transpiration which contributes more water to the  
8 atmosphere for rain than any evaporation from all the  
9 oceans. Remember the drought? Remember no saving  
10 hurricane? Remember population growth and our  
11 unquenchable thirst? Three or four stations reduces  
12 the plants ability to process carbon dioxide or produce  
13 oxygen. Excess atmospheric carbon dioxide is  
14 contributing to global warming. This isn't just a  
15 local issue, it is global. This modified Berlin wall  
16 is unacceptable -- an unacceptable expense when it only  
17 exacerbates the social, political and environmental  
18 issues. Please, let's do a swell environmental impact  
19 statement and follow through on those objectives.

20 MR. RUFFENNACK: Thank you, very much.

21 Anyone else? Okay. With that we will  
22 conclude the meeting. Again, the flier you received at  
23 the registration has the address for your comments to  
24 be sent through December 16th. On behalf of JTF-6 and  
25 INS I thank you very much for coming this evening. I

1 appreciate it.

2 (Whereupon the meeting was concluded.)

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U.S. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE  
AND  
JOINT TASK FORCE SIX  
SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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STATEMENT OF FACTS  
November 2, 1998  
Public Scoping Meeting

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Reporter's Attendance Time: 6:15-8:15  
Place Attended: McAllen Civic Center

Speakers


Ron Ruffennack (Moderator)  
Ray Garza  
John Esquivel  
Mike Rossi  
Chris Ingram

Public Comment

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Ninfa Ochoa-Drueger  
Arturo Longoria  
Phil Anderson  
Linda Gardner

WITNESS MY HAND, this the 24<sup>th</sup> day of November,  
A.D., 1998.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MARK A. KVAPIL  
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in and for the State of Texas  
Ph. (956) 318-2266  
Certification No. 2088  
Expiration: 12-31-98